

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS ALONG MAINE'S COAST
BASED ON INPUT RECEIVED AT FIVE BAY MANAGEMENT PUBLIC MEETINGS IN 2005

ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

Water based activities have unintended or uncontrolled impacts on the marine environment

1. Impact of harvesting: Impacts of mussel dragging; impact of farmed shellfish on phytoplankton (carrying capacity concern); overfishing; depleted fisheries (e.g. urchins, scallops, groundfish) and other stocks (e.g. American eel, dogfish, and flounder); impacts of aquaculture (including on water quality); shellfish harvesting harms ecologically sensitive areas; new fisheries are often underregulated (e.g. rockweed); farmed salmon impacts wild salmon; lobster traps cut off by passing boats continue to fish as ghost traps.
2. Impact of recreation/tourism: More recreational boats pumping out holding tanks; lack of pump-out stations; vessel discharges; cruise ships impact water quality and whales.
3. Impact of dredging and waste: Dredging needed for ships yet it disturbs habitat; need dredge spoils disposal options (some spoils are contaminated); hazardous waste disposal; deliberate dumping of junk into bay; oil spills from boats.

Associated social implications:

- a. Impact on harvesting: Increase in invasive species impacting lobstering and crabbing; conservation efforts are stymied (no fishing area violated by rogue urchin divers; no incentives for local conservation efforts because outsiders can come in and harvest); species interactions limit human use (sea cucumbers in lobster traps, seals attack salmon in net pens.)
- b. Impact on recreation/tourism/enjoyment: Dead seals make kayaking unappealing; noise from air propeller boats reduces enjoyment.
- c. Impact on scientific research: Marine lab needs clean salt water but mussel dragging damages intake and stirs up sediment; University student research area (markers and sites) disturbed by draggers and urchin fishing; lack of intertidal areas where public access is restricted but research can take place; lack of subtidal areas where boating and commercial fishing (esp. bottom trawling/dragging) isn't allowed.

Land based activities have unintended or uncontrolled impacts on the marine environment

1. Impact of recreation/tourism: Increased tourism putting pressure on islands and remaining wild places; intertidal habitats (dunes, marshes, tidepools) negatively impacted by visitor use/trampling; dogs disturb nesting birds; recreation threatens seabird habitat.
2. Impact of land use practices: Decline in water quality caused by loss of vegetated buffer zones, urbanization, non-point source pollution, local sewage treatment, dog waste, industry (paper mill, cement factory, industrial pollutants); filling wetlands.
3. Impacts of physical structures: Dams restrict anadromous/diadromous fish passage; dams change ecosystems; seawall impacts; excessive development on small islands; development encroachment on marshes, wetlands and beaches; loss of eelgrass (e.g. from dock construction.)

Associated social implications:

- a. Impact on harvesting: Inability to harvest clams, mussels or other shellfish due to water pollution; declining water quality impacts lobstering and crabbing.
- b. Impact on recreation/tourism/enjoyment: Commercial uses (resulting in small oil discharges, industrial pollutants from paper mills) degrade environment for recreation; stormwater discharges result in trash on beach, beaches are closed; development impacts views and access.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

Two or more user groups want to use the same area for different activities

1. Recreation impacted by other uses: Swimmer safety compromised by others (e.g. speedboats, seadoos); too many uses (e.g. moorings, lobstering, fishing, swimming) in one place inhibits recreation; intense seasonal (summer) use by recreational boaters; motorboats are hazard for kayakers/kayakers that wander into path of motorboats; large boats in channels create heavy wake and safety hazard for small boats and kayaks.
2. Access to water limited for all users: Competition at public docks with recreational users (i.e. tourists block landing for unloading of clam diggers), as well as with other commercial users; public access (for recreation, beaches, passive enjoyment, transient yachts, kayaks/canoes, etc.) is declining, usually attributed to increased use and/or increased population (with resultant loss of open space, loss of traditional rights-of-way, closure of beaches as lots are sold); threatened or limited working waterfront (for fishing, clamming, worming, or other commercial uses) – attributed to increased waterfront development and taxes, as well as to competition at public facilities; limited moorings (overflowing, lack of protected areas); parking limitations (not enough spaces, exorbitant fees, lobstermen taking spots early in morning.)
3. Conflicts between harvesters: Lobstermen and mussel rafts compete for space; fiercely guarded lobster territories hem some fishermen in to certain areas; fixed gear conflicts with ability to trawl; pillage of mussel beds by harvesters from away
4. Safe navigation concerns: Lobster gear in channel creates navigational challenge for other boaters; conflict between lobster boats and most other boaters (from kayakers to LNG tankers); recreational boaters and jet skis operate with no safety training or boater education, creating hazard for themselves and others; many different vessel types (large, small, working, transit, recreation, fast, slow) all trying to use same space.

Conflicting perspectives on appropriate use of the coast

1. Water access (public or working waterfronts) disputes: Water access is generally accepted as insufficient, but specific proposals are often opposed by local residents who are concerned about impacts (increased use, environmental degradation, etc) in their area.
2. Some shorefront property owners oppose commercial fishing/aquaculture: New coastal residents are perceived to have less interest in commercial uses of water, including fisheries and aquaculture, than long-term residents; opposition to mussel rafts; riparian landowner boat interference at aquaculture site; some coastal residents feel their private property rights are not respected.
3. Differing views on aesthetics: Cruise ships (and other specific activities) believed to impact aesthetics.
4. Planning/Zoning Disagreements: Conservation and education vs. transportation and industrial uses visions for Sears Island; in multiuse areas, everyone thinks their use is more valid.

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Economics

1. Support economic uses of coast: Ecotourism; need dredged channels for commercial maritime commerce; encourage acceptance of aquaculture industry and waterfront development; need to preserve native traditional uses of resources; need to prevent regulatory history from disadvantaging some groups (local fishermen may not have permits to access returning groundfish stocks.)
2. Balance economic development with other issues: Conservation goals should be balanced with achieving economic diversity and maintaining small fishing communities; important to preserve traditional working uses while controlling coastal development; balance waterfront development with environmental concerns.

NO PROBLEM!

Use or Enjoyment of an area

1. Desire to maintain identified places as they are: Peaceful enjoyment; sailing; kayaking; recreational fishing; camping; whale watching; shore-based recreational opportunities; island conservation; scenic values
2. Desire to conduct resource extraction in same locations as currently used: Lobster, shellfish (mussels, clams, quahogs, scallops), urchins, crabs, rockweed, aquaculture (finfish or shellfish)
3. Desire to maintain existing biological integrity of coastal ecosystems; desire to keep remote outer islands remote; some sites have ecological value